

THE EXCITER

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VHF AND UP

Project OSCAR, which everyone has been reading about in CQ and QST, will combine two great hobbies—amateur radio and satellite radio reception. Initial efforts will be for an all-amateur group in the Frisco area to build a satellite transmitter package to be placed in orbit on a piggyback ride with one of the Discoverer satellites.

The Oscar transmitter will operate on 145 mc. and will transmit a series of dididitidit's as it orbits by.

The venture is the first all-amateur effort in the space age (except for Dr. Goddard's original work back in the 30's!) including the building of the TX package, the recording of radio passes, reporting to Sunnyvale, Calif., by amateur radio, and analysis of the gathered data.

Over 600 operators all over the world have joined the group to report data. By having many listening posts, new propagation or satellite phenomena may be observed. Don't forget that the textbooks of the 30's said that VHF was limited to line of sight. Try to tell that to a 50 mc., 50 state WAS man today!

K5PKX, M. D. Harris, talked to Don Stoner, W6TNS, during the October Kerrville convention concerning OSCAR and he advised that a possible orbit might take place in early November. Locally, W5LUU, W5KRH and W5LFM plan to work as a group to monitor and report the signals. Now is your chance to join in a worthwhile scientific effort. Write to PROJECT OSCAR, BOX 183, SUNNYVALE, CALIF., for details; refer also to QST for Sept. and Oct. 61.

On 21 October 61, as a part of Pro-

ject Westford, formerly Needles, a third of a billion dipoles cut for 8000 mc. were launched into orbit 2000 miles above earth. Too small to be seen even with a powerful telescope, the hair-thin- half-inch long copper dipoles will gradually disperse into a belt around the earth where high-power communications signals will be reflected off the belt to a distant station. The dipoles are expected to stay in orbit for about a year and were planned to be short lived as there is the possibility the thin belt will cloud the sky for the radio astronomer. (No, Pat, you won't be able to bounce your 2-meter signals off the belt!).

Have you heard the one about the baker who did all his experimental work on new breads and cakes using a radio chassis? Regards for now.

Cal Graf, W5LFM

DX NOTES

A wonderful time had by all! That's the story of the Kerrville Convention; and it was certainly true for the DX fraternity. Things started off merrily in the West Gulf DX Clubs' hospital-ity room on Friday night. Saturday was climaxed by W4BPD's most entertaining report on his DX-pedition; and on Sunday, three DX'ers won top attendance prizes, including W5UX and the XYL of W5AZB. West Gulf DX Club Officers elected were W5-CE President, W5BUK Vice President, W5PM Secretary, W5AZB and W5-AFX Board of Directors members at large. San Antonio DX'ers seen at the convention included W5BE, W5JC, W5FNA, W5UX, W5EJT and W5-LGG.

Several DX-peditions are in the making for the next few months, and promise to liven up the bands con-

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siderably. Watch for YVOAA from Aves Island, W5HZI/KC4 from Navassa Island and Danny Weil, VP2VB, from the Marquesas Islands. Rare Anartic DX now on includes LU4ZM in the South Orkneys, LU3ZO in the South Shetlands, VKOFZ, MacQuarrie Island, and VP8EG on South Georgia. Look for them on 20 in the evenings after 6 p.m. local time, mostly on CW.

Most DX'ers hereabouts succeeded in working one or more stations of the recent Kamaran Islands DX-pedition (VS9KAC et al). Since the Kamaran Islands are in the Red Sea at some distance from Aden, there is a good chance for separate country status. Also most local DX'ers worked XT2A in Haute Volta Republic for a new one. Heartfelt sympathy to W5UX on this one. Bob worked an XT2A alright, but the bounder was a pirate who came on the air one night after the real XT2A had QRT. This pirate passed out dozens of bogus QSO's that only resulted in a letter of explanation from the authentic XT2A instead of a QSL for the

unlucky ones on this end.

The fall operating season is getting in full swing; don't forget the CQ DX Contests! See you in the pile-ups.

73 & DX
Len, W5LGG

WHAT IS A HAM?

What is a Ham? The dictionary says it is the thigh of an animal.

SSB is something that sounds like a duck, but really belongs to a man.

CW is someone who talks with his hands.

MARS operator is one who has his head in the clouds calling Alpha Alpha.

A DX operator chases dogs to take X-rays of them and make them into QSL's.

HANDLE is something your parents gave you at birth.

SHACK is the tidy room where the ham does his operating.

A XYL is something the OM is married to and the YL is what she was until she gave up her freedom.

RUNNING BAREFOOT—With a KWM-2 the whole family is probably barefoot.

A CERTIFICATE COLLECTOR is one who has holes in his shack and needs the paper before the snow flies.

The TESTER is one who has very little education since he can only count to five.

Some Hams have microphones that get very hot and they have to blow into them to cool them off.

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*H*AVE I seen you lately — why not? You said you wish San Antonio had a complete ham store that had what you wanted when you wanted it. Well, that's what I'd like to have, too. A few months ago I was on your side of the counter and I think I have an idea of the kind of stuff you want and need. So stop by and give me a try. If I ain't got it, I'll get it.

I DO A little hamming myself—AM, SSB, 6 meters, 2 meters, RTTY, FM and mobile soon. So stop in and we'll swap lies over some of our lousy free coffee.

*W*HEN I took over old Don left me with a double bunch of used equipment, some dogs and some cream puffs. I've got to move them so I can get in some more new choice goodies.

*W*E'VE CUT the prices till it hurts and will even give another 10% discount on used gear if we don't have to take a trade in. We can finance your deal—10% down, the balance with only 6% bank interest. So drop in and take a look.

*S*ATURDAY MORNING, that's a real deal—the royal order of Knob Twisters and butt stompers meet. That's when all my ham buddies come in to swap lies, twist knobs, drink free coffee, stomp butts out on the floor, copy the addresses for QSL's out of the call book, read magazines, everything but spend money. I don't want all the ham business, just yours. I don't want to stock everything, just what you want.

*S*O STOP in and see old skinny Charlie—he's the guy what's got what you want when you want it more times than not. See you soon.

73's,

Charlie K5VCR

CARLA WRAPUP

Hurricane Carla is history but we want to recognize some of the Hams that performed a great public service during the storm. The list is by no means complete and our apology to those we miss.

Lee, K5HZR reported the following check-ins on the 7290 net; W5-KLV, Jerry; K5UQT, Norm; W5-FAR, Alton; K5MOF, Aubrey! W5-CAW, Stan; K5DKM, Paul; K5DXB, Stu; K5TXB, Tony; K5ENK, Fred; and K5DMK, Check.

Lee notes the outstanding operators during the period 9 to 14 September as W5GXA, Bill, at Nederland. Bill went 72 hours with virtually no sleep. W5FBJ, Dick in Beaumont and W5-ARY, Bill, in Corpus Christi. K5-DND, Curt, of Galina Park in Houston demonstrated the spirit of Amateur Radio. Curt tried to phone a message into the stricken area but the lines were down so he drove into the area and delivered the message personally. On the way home, his car went off the mud-slick road and was wrecked. Luckily, Curt was not

injured.

K4EID/5. Bob, in Corpus had his antenna blown away.

The YLs and XYLs were very prominent operators during the storm. K5VZB, Mary Ann, of East Bernard was right in there with the OMs handling the traffic. K5CRJ, Sarah, of La Marque was the only Ham contact with Galveston. She also handled traffic into Texas City. Johnnie, K5-BWB, of Wichita Falls was another of the girls that was working traffic.

Durwood, K5DWE, of Leakey packed up his gear and headed for the storm area. He operated mobile and was the only contact with Seadrift, Palacios and Pt. Aransas. He had to deliver the messages personally since the phone lines were all down.

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